

Appendix F

Study Methodology

In June 2003, the Emergency Management Council approved a new, one-year work plan for the Task Force to conduct a comprehensive review of "the state of emergency management" in Washington's counties, cities and tribes. The findings and conclusions included in this report were developed after conducting document research, interviews, facilitated group discussions, site visits, and a survey of local emergency management programs.

Document Research. A bibliography of the research and reference documents used, and referenced throughout this report, is included at the end of this report.

Interviews. The project team conducted individual interviews with each of the 15 Task Force members, its ex-officio members, and Task Force sponsors Major General Timothy Lowenberg and Glenn Woodbury, then Emergency Management Division Director, Washington Military Department. Additionally, the project team interviewed state Emergency Management Division staff, state and local subject matter experts, and local emergency management professionals. Finally, team members interviewed select emergency management professionals outside of Washington State to identify and evaluate alternative emergency management structures.

Facilitated Discussions. Beginning in January 2004, the project team participated in regional homeland security district meetings, regional homeland security coordinators meetings, emergency management directors meetings, and visited Washington cities, counties and tribes to facilitate discussions on the current state of local emergency management.

Site Visits and Direct Observation

Throughout this study, members of the project team traveled to Washington cities, counties and tribes, visiting administrative offices, emergency operations centers, disaster and recovery sites, and observing training exercises and recovery operations. To identify and evaluate alternative emergency management structures, the project team and representatives of the Task Force also visited state and local emergency management facilities outside of Washington State.

Survey

The project team developed a survey to collect data on local emergency management programs. The survey examined the current capabilities of local emergency management programs to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters. Survey findings are included in Appendix H.

The results of the survey were used in conjunction with other research results and data gathered from other recent studies and needs assessments, interviews and facilitated discussions, and site visits and observations to paint a broad picture of the health of emergency management in Washington State and to develop findings and identify systemic improvements to the statewide system supporting local emergency management in this state.